



The Parish Church of St George, Jesmond

Parochial Church Council

Chair: The Reverend Debbie Loughran

Lay Chair: Professor Janet Wilson

Secretary: Dr Nigel Russell-Sewell

Minutes of the Meeting held on Wednesday 16 July 2025

at 7.30 pm in the Choir Vestry, St George's Church

Present: Jonathan Booth, Joan Grenfell, Mike de la Hunt, Tom Klenka, Debbie Loughran, Alison Mattinson, Izzy McDonald-Booth, James Parkin, Kay Plumley, Nigel Russell-Sewell, Brent Swinburne, Janet Wilson, Libbie Wilson.

Absent: Lana Liu

1. The Chair opened the meeting with a scripture reading and prayer.
2. All were welcomed to the meeting.
3. Apologies were noted.

4. Declaration of Interests

- 4.1 There were two declarations of interest made in relation to Item 7.
- 4.2 A draft Conflict of Interest policy had been circulated. This was approved and formally adopted by the PCC (proposed: James Parkin; seconded: Tom Klenka).

5. Minutes of the last meeting

- 5.1 The minutes of the PCC Meeting held on 20 May were approved (proposed: Jonathan Booth; seconded: Kay Plumley).

6. Matters arising and action log

- 6.1 *See revised Action Log appended to the Minutes.*

- 6.2 A question was asked about the difference between “inclusive church” and “everyone is welcome”. Inclusive Church is an organisation that promotes churches that welcome all people. Whilst all churches say “all are welcome”, not all are inclusive.
- 6.3 Reported: the banner for Pride cost £28.
- 6.4 Two grants have been received: £2,800 in May; and £649 for LED lights in hall received in June.
- 6.5 Item 18.4: reported that where toilets had changed to all cubicles at York Minster large queues were formed. Not perceived to be an issue here as we have a higher proportion of toilets to numbers who may wish to use them.

7. Reader authorisations

Nigel Russell-Sewell and James Parkin left the room, returning for Item 8.

- 7.1 David Julian Casati, James Parkin and Nigel Russell-Sewell were unanimously approved for recommendation for Licensed Reader training (proposed: Brent Swinburne, seconded: Jonathan Booth). Chair to inform the Continuing Ministerial Formation Officer.

ACTION: Chair

8. Garden of Remembrance

- 8.1 Further to the discussion on the accurate marking of plots, and that the Garden is getting full, the Chair has spoken to the Chancellor. The Chancellor will not permit reuse of plots as there was nothing saying this might happen originally to families. There is space for about eight more. Plots aren't marked, but they are individual plots. Other churches take the approach that there is one large single plot for lots of people.
- 8.2 The Chair proposed that the area by the west wall is made into a single plot such that ashes can be interred there for the foreseeable future. The plot will never become full. Families will be notified at the time of request for interment. This is a more sustainable approach to using the Garden. The PCC unanimously approved.
- 8.3 The Chair will ask the Tuesday Group to tidy the border up in preparation for use, and check paperwork to ensure the ground has been consecrated.

ACTION: Chair

9. Fête debrief

- 9.1 Tables have become an issue with being heavy, difficult to store and potentially hazardous. A solution has been explored and two options proposed. Comparison with other companies has been made and Folding Tables UK were the preferred supplier. Proposal to purchase 20 tables (15 kg and have handles). All agreed.

ACTION: Treasurer

- 9.2 Future date: either 16 May or 13 June. Pros and cons for both were discussed. The May date fits into the Jesmond Festival, but would be a Spring event. For Summer and more reliable weather, June would be better. The PCC was reminded that the Fête belongs to the PCC. Noted that a number of students attended this year, so keeping May is a good outreach opportunity. On consideration, 16 May was agreed.

10. Music

- 10.1 With the APCM held during the service and live-streamed, an offer of a substantial donation towards music by someone who viewed the service was put forward. The Director of Music has proposed employing a younger person to do outreach in schools (one term initially, with grant funding being sought for future sustainability). A job description is expected. PCC may need to make a decision by email over the summer so that someone can be in post in September. PCC requested a Business Case accompanying the job description to better understand the role and potential commitments.

ACTION: Chair

11. Safeguarding (standing item)

- 11.1 The Safeguarding Officer is reviewing the systems for DBS and training and will follow-up with those who need to carry these out. Numbers of those who have completed training and DBS will be presented at future meetings, along with numbers who have yet to complete these.
- 11.2 There is nothing otherwise to report.

12. Finance (standing item)

- 12.1 The Treasurer reported working with the accounts to fully understand the financial situation at St George's. An initial analysis of income was presented. Proposed that context to compare years and show where our income comes from and where our expenditure is will be presented in future, which may in turn identify savings. PCC approved the proposed approach.
- 12.2 The Giving sermon series will be in October.
- 12.3 A Finance Committee is being established to better understand the finance data to help everyone in the community understand what their money is used for. Finance Committee will be convened in July.

13. Charitable Giving disbursements

- 13.1 Noted: giving in 2019 = £3,000; 2020 = £2,000; 2021 = £2,000; 2024 = £4,000.

- 13.2 Discussed: giving should be based on the previous year's income rather than the current year's projected income. Proposed: a percentage is given rather an amount so the conversation is not held every year.
- 13.3 Suggested: Treasurer will provide income and expenditure along with charitable giving to propose a percentage. Decision to be made by correspondence.

ACTION: Treasurer

14. Building and Grounds Group (standing item)

- 14.1 Meeting notes circulated.
- 14.2 Paving work: two quotes received, cheapest £1,800 + VAT. PCC asked to approve £2,160 total to fix paving and repair trip hazards. PCC approved.

15. St George's Community Hub (standing item)

- 15.1 Meeting notes circulated.
- 15.2 The Summer Concert raised £1,155 and all involved were congratulated. Noted: the majority of the audience were not regular attendees at St George's so this was a good outreach event.

16. Reports from Deanery/Diocesan/General Synods (standing item)

- 16.1 Deanery: no meeting since last PCC.
- 16.2 Deanery Development Group met in the Cathedral with +Helen-Ann to look at next year. The theme this year was 'seeking'; next year's is 'sharing'. More information will be provided in due course. Question will be how we can work effectively in mission and ministry with others in the Deanery.
- 16.3 Next Deanery Synod will propose Safeguarding Officers form a group that meets regularly.
- 16.4 Diocesan Synod met on 7 June. Minutes are not yet available. People who had been elected to committees were introduced. The annual report and financial statements were received. 'Living in Love and Faith' was the main consultation topic. +Mark spoke on racial justice and noted the Diocese is to employ a Racial Justice Officer. Notes will be circulated. Next meeting 29 November.

ACTION: Chair

- 16.5 General Synod has just met. A report will be prepared for Diocesan Synod and shared with PCC.

ACTION: Izzy McDonald-Booth

17. Churchwarden updates

- 17.1 Janet Wilson noted that she is on her own and steps down in May. There is currently no succession plan for Churchwarden. PCC need to be looking now for a new Churchwarden. A job description is being written for sharing more widely. The job is not as big as many perceive as post-holders get involved in activities that interest them.
- 17.2 Noted: it has become a 'tradition' at St George's that the Churchwardens do any jobs no-one else wants to do and the role has expanded significantly. The job description will be informed by the Churchwardens Measure 2001 and other local expectations of the Churchwarden(s) may be left unfulfilled in future.

ACTION: Chair and Churchwarden

18. Any other business

- 18.1 The Chair proposed an away day for PCC to explore some of the areas PCC don't usually get an opportunity to discuss, guided by a resource "PCC Tonight". PCC agreed this would be of interest. A Doodle poll will be circulated for a Saturday in September or October.

ACTION: Chair

- 18.2 Related to 18.1, a question was raised about the content of PCC meetings, in particular about outreach and exploring data to help support our vision and mission. All agreed this was something to explore on the away day for potential future regular discussion.

19. The meeting closed at 9.50 pm with The Grace.

DATES OF FUTURE MEETINGS

PCC Meeting	Deadline for Agenda items
Tuesday 16 September	Sunday 07 September, midday
Wednesday 19 November	Sunday 09 November, midday
Tuesday 13 January 2026	Sunday 04 January 2026, midday
Wednesday 18 March	Sunday 08 March, midday
<i>Annual Meetings, Sunday 10 May (separate notification)</i>	
Tuesday 19 May	Sunday 10 May, midday

All meetings will begin at 7.30 pm. Meetings held on Tuesday will normally be held in the Choir Vestry; Wednesday meetings will normally be held in the Winskell Room.

ACTION LOG

Future agenda items:

January 2026 Review of EV charging (annual)

March 2026 APCM format (annual)

March 2026 Solar panels on church roof (annual)

Meeting	Item	Action	Progress	Status
24-11	8.5	Churchwardens to enhance Ministry of Welcome provided	Training dates set for November	
24-11	10.11	Treasurer to continue investigations into endowment fund	Ongoing. Tom to speak to Mike (25-05)	
25-05	19.1	Chair to pursue signage for Memorial Garden	Meeting to take place 17 September 2025	
25-07	7.1	Chair to pass recommendation to CMFO	Complete (and all three recommended have been accepted following Discernment process)	
25-07	8.3	Chair to ask Tuesday Group to tidy border	Complete – work has started	
25-07	8.3	Chair to check Garden is consecrated	The garden is consecrated – a map has been obtained	
25-07	9.1	Treasurer to purchase 20 tables	Complete	
25-07	10.1	Chair to request Business Case and Job Description from Director of Music	Complete and circulated to PCC for comment	
25-07	13.3	Treasurer to provide analysis for Charitable Giving	Complete – used in giving series (September 2025)	
25-07	16.4	Chair to circulate notes from Diocesan Synod	None received	

25-07	16.5	Izzy to share General Synod report	On its way	
25-07	17.2	Chair and Churchwarden to prepare job description	Complete	
25-07	18.1	Chair to circulate Doodle Poll for Away Day date	Complete	
NEW ACTION		COMPLETED	NOT YET COMPLETED (UP TO 4 MONTHS)	NOT YET COMPLETED (OVER 4 MONTHS)